

Philosophy Unit

Understanding the Times

Philosophy: The rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge, and conduct

Questions of Philosophy:

1. What is real?
2. What is true?
3. How can we know?

Key Terms

1. Epistemology—the study of knowing
 - a. How do we know?
 - b. What do we know?
 - c. Why do we know?
 - d. Is our knowledge true?
2. Metaphysics—the study of being & reality
It deals with purpose and meaning (e.g. Who am I and why am I here?)
3. Cosmology—the study of the structure, origin, and design of the universe
4. Ontology—the study of the existence of being

Christian Philosophy

1. What is real?

Supernaturalism

- a. reality is made up of more than just the physical world
 - b. Both the physical (natural, material) and spiritual (immaterial) exist.
2. What is true?
 - a. Anything that accurately reflects reality
 - b. Correspondence theory of truth
 3. How can we know?
 - a. Revelation

- b. **Experience** (empiricism)
 - c. **Reason** (rationalism)
 - d. **Science**
- 4. Cosmology
 - a. God created the heavens and the earth...
 - b. **Order** and **rationality** are exhibited on every level
- 5. Ontology: **God** is the source of all being and reality

Islamic Philosophy

- 1. What is real?
 - a. Supernaturalism—reality is made up of more than just the physical world
 - b. Both the **physical** and **spiritual** exist.
- 2. What is true?

Anything that accurately reflects reality.
- 3. How can you know?
 - a. **Revelation** (**Qur'an**)
 - b. **Experience**
 - c. **Reason**
 - d. **Science**
- 4. Cosmology: **Allah** created the heavens and the earth.
- 5. Ontology: **Allah** is the source of all being and reality.

Secular Humanist Philosophy

- 1. What is real?

Naturalism

 - a. Reality is made up of **matter alone**
 - b. Anything not made of matter **doesn't exist**.
- 2. What is true?

Only that which can be **verified** through **science**.
- 3. How can you know?

The **scientific method**

4. Cosmology
 - a. The physical universe came into being accidentally.
 - b. Matter spontaneously generated life and reached human beings through evolution.
 - c. Design is minimized because it could be interpreted as proof of a designer.
5. Ontology
 - a. The universe naturally exists on its own and for itself.
 - b. It is self-existing and not created.

Marxist-Leninist Philosophy

1. What is real?
 - a. Dialectical Materialism (Materialism = Naturalism)
 - b. Reality is made up of matter alone
 - c. Dialectical Materialism
2. What is true?
 - a. True belief—things expected to be true but not yet proven by investigation
 - b. Knowledge—those things which have been proven empirically
3. How can you know?
 - a. Through science
 - b. Through experience
4. Cosmology: Dialectical materialism moved matter from an inorganic state to life, then to animals, then humans, and finally into organized social institutions like governments and nations.
5. Ontology: The universe naturally exists on its own

New Age Philosophy

1. What is real?
Non-naturalism
 - a. Nothing is natural
 - b. Everything is spiritual (supernatural)
2. What is true?

- a. Truth is a feeling or experience
 - b. Each person finds truth by looking within themselves
3. How can one know?
 - a. Experience
 - b. Inner soul-searching (meditation)
4. Cosmology
 - a. The matter of the universe is merely a reflection of spiritual reality
 - b. Matter can be controlled by an enlightened mind.
5. Ontology: The universe is self-existing

Postmodernist Philosophy

1. What is real?
Anti-realism
 - a. Reality is subjectively built by human thought
 - b. Reality is what you make it
2. What is true?
 - a. Truth = absolute truth and doesn't exist
 - b. truths = the accepted ideas of a society or group of people
3. How can one know? Experience
4. Cosmology: Structure, origin, or design are individual reflections of reality
5. Ontology: The universe is self-existing